

Extremes: Does an Ice Bath Work? The Sauna?



by The Spartan Editors ·



The Ice Bath and the Sauna.



Healthy?



Both mental and physical health are critical for athletic performance. Environmental conditions also play a crucial role. What happens to your body when you're exposed to extremes of cold and heat? Can your body adapt to these conditions? It's important to know what happens to the body during extremes of temperature, what science has taught us about human environmental limits, and ways we can do to safely take out endurance to the next level. We specifically drill down into the efficacy of the ice bath and [the sauna](#) for training and recovery.

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The Lore of the Ice Bath, the Sauna and Extremes

Hyperthermia and Hypothermia

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in body temp and it exceeds the body's ability to lose heat. Depending on how it's measured typically hyperthermia begins when your core body temp is above 100.5F (38C) and extreme hyperthermia is at 104F (40C). Why it's bad is that key enzymes in the body start to break down. And at about 106F cells start to die. Remember our normal body temp is 98.6F (37C)



Now with this, I'm talking about internal or core body temperature obviously the external temp can be much higher. The key, your body's ability to lose the heat, stay hydrated and maintain your core temperature. Everything is about homeostasis or balance.

Now how about Hypothermia - that's the opposite extreme. It's when the body loses more heat than it can absorb. This begins once body core temp goes below 95F and starts with shivering because that's a way for your body to try and increase body temp. Once internal temps reach about 86F (30C) cellular metabolic processes start to shut down and this makes walking almost impossible. Now that's the extreme but there's a lot in between. Most humans can't withstand internal core temps below 70F.

With these temp extremes it's important to keep in mind that our bodies can adjust and acclimate to some environmental changes gradually. It builds tolerance and resiliency. You know the stories of Joe De Sena, Wim Hof, and others who have pushed, conditioned and trained their bodies to adapt to some pretty extreme situations. This is where the ice bath can come in.

Many of the boundaries that describe what a typical human can survive are relatively well established. You may have heard the reference the "rule of threes" that's air, water, and food. It equal to 3 min, 3 days, and 3 weeks respectively so that's ...3 min without air, 3 days without water, and 3 weeks without food. Yet, we've all heard of some that have exceeded those limits and pushed the boundaries of what we thought humanly possible. Training and exposure to extremes of temperature,



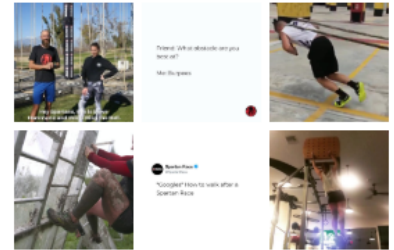
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come with your body, and stay hydrated.

KEY TERMS & IDEAS:

- Mental and physical health are critical for athletic performance but environmental factors play a significant role.
- Hyperthermia: an uncontrolled increase in body temperature that exceeds the body's ability to lose heat. Begins when core body temp hits approx 100.5F (38C) and extreme hyperthermia is at 104F (40C)
- Hypothermia: when the body loses more heat than it can absorb. This begins when core body temp dips to below 95F (35C) and your body begins to shiver as a way to produce heat.
- The human body can adjust to temp extremes and improve tolerance. When done gradually and with proper training you can build resiliency.
- Each person's tolerance to environmental extremes can differ. The key is to know your limits and build gradually and safely.

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Follow Nada on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/nada-milosavljevic-35b502b9/>

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<https://www.amazon.com/What-Doesnt-Kill-Environmental-Conditioning/dp/1623366909>

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